

Finding the Common Ground Between Science and Security

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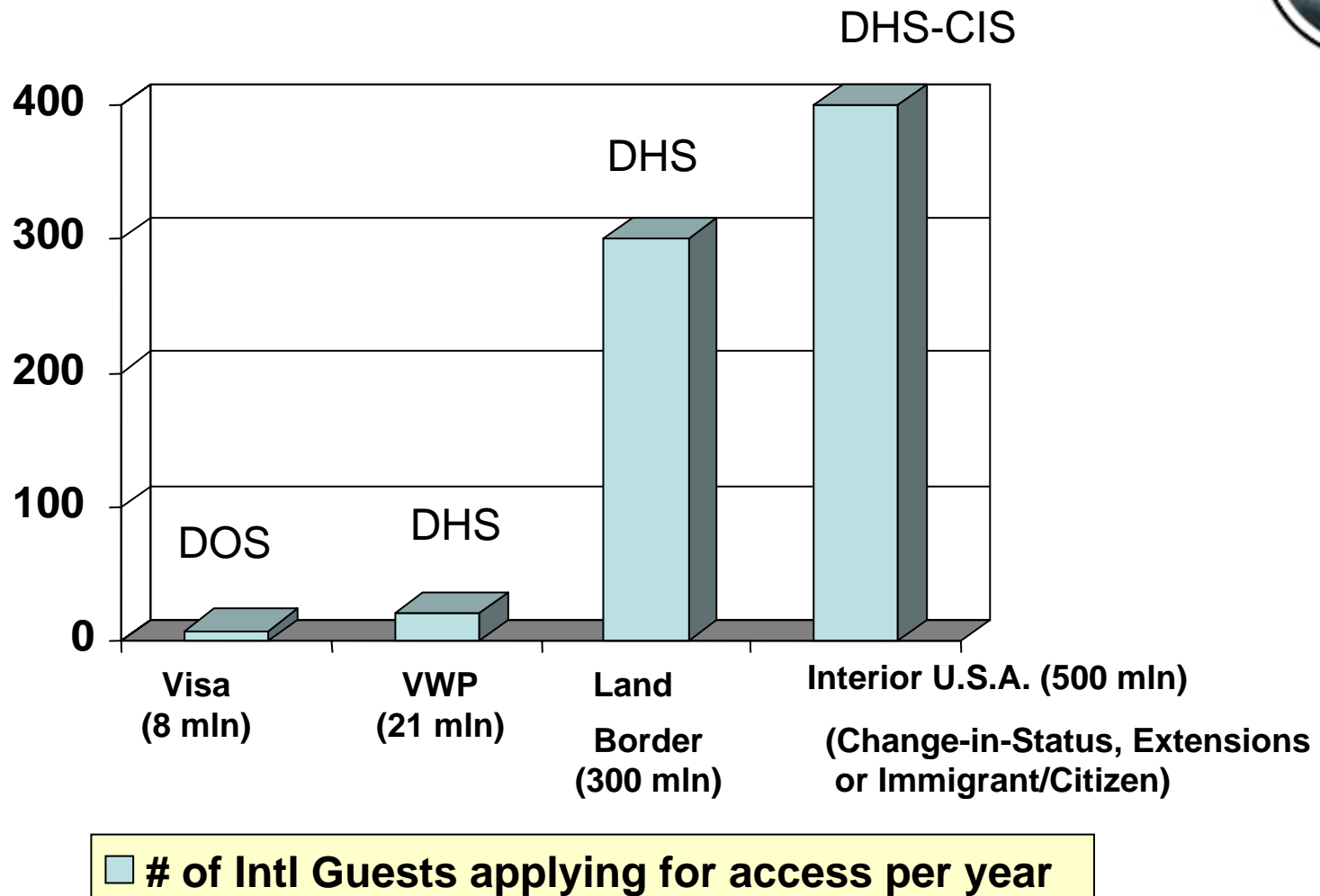


Overview



- Review of basic visa statistics
- Overview of Visa Mantis process, recent changes and improvements (2004, 2005 GAO findings)
- After-entry screening discussion
- Questions/discussion of current/future DOE screening process

International visitor access

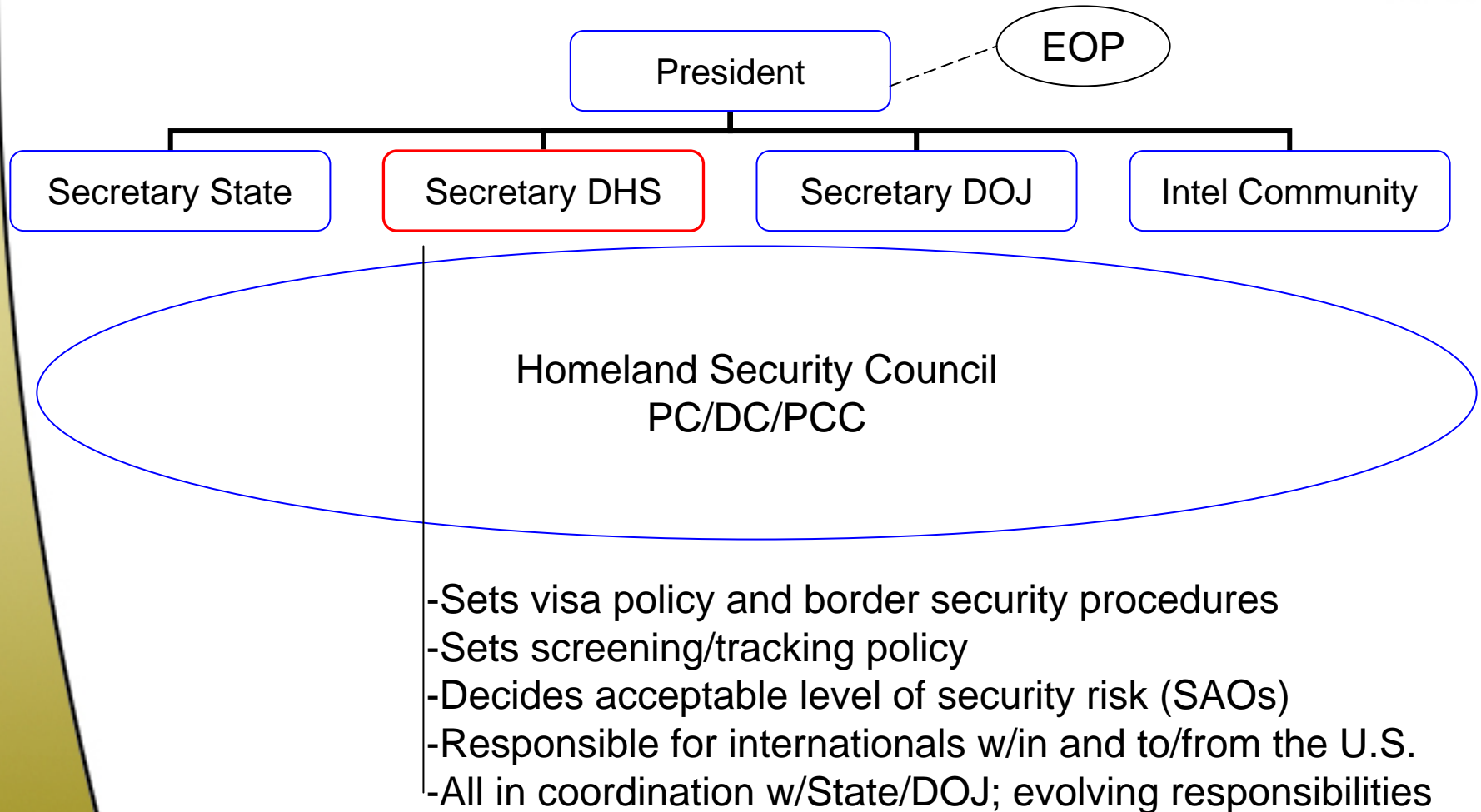


Border Crossings Per Year (est.)



- 550 Million crossing a border
 - 330 Million est. non-U.S. citizens
- 37 Million by air, mostly for business or tourism
- 8 million visa application, 73% issued
- 1 million tracked in SEVIS (F, M, J)
- 500,000 scientists
- 30,000 DOE Foreign National Visitors
- 18,000 receive Mantis Security Advisory Opinions (SAO's); denials low

Who is involved in Visa Mantis Policy?





- 2-3 week wait for interviews
- Average of 67 days for visa processing when Mantis SAO was requested
- Consular officers unsure about when to apply visa Mantis
- Problems with information dissemination contributed to delays



- State, FBI and DHS should develop and implement a plan to improve the visa Mantis process
- Set milestones to reduce the number of pending cases
- Develop performance goals and measurements for processing visa Mantis
- Additional training to consular posts to clarify visa Mantis process



- Average time to process a Mantis check dropped from 67 to 15 days
 - Additional staffing at State to process Mantis cases
 - State developed and implemented an electronic tracking system (ETS)



- Number of pending Mantis cases also dropped significantly
 - State developed and implemented an electronic tracking system (ETS)
 - Interagency process clarified roles and responsibilities of agencies involved in the Mantis process



- Foreign students and scholars given priority on interviews
- Mantis clearance validity period extended for certain categories
 - Up to 4 years for foreign students
 - Up to 2 years for exchange visitors
 - Assuming purpose of visit does not change



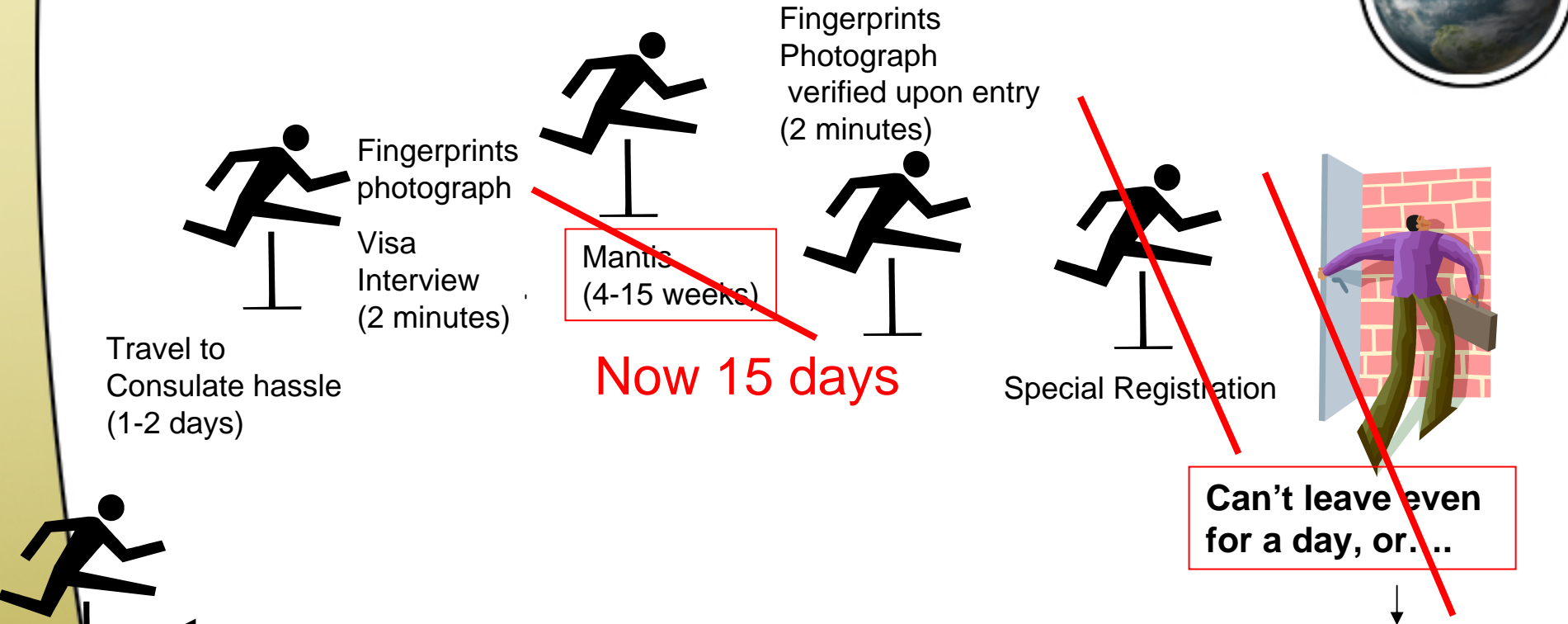
- “Consular officers at key posts continue to have questions about how to apply the Mantis program and identify visa applicants who should receive Mantis checks.”
- Many agencies involved in Mantis processing are still not fully connected to State’s ETS.



State and DHS should:

- develop a formal timeline for fully connecting all agencies involved in Mantis processing to State's ETS.
- develop a program to provide consular officers at key posts additional educational opportunities and interaction with State Officials responsible for the Visa Mantis program.

Review of Recent Improvements



Solutions FY'05:

- faster, better, smarter visa process
- reduce redundant re-checks if low security risk
- reform Mantis overall
- add scientific input to security advisory opinions
- strengthen DHS shift to a more focused, intel-driven visa policy

Now:

Students: 4 yr Mantis

Scientists: 2 yr Mantis

Improvement is an Iterative Process

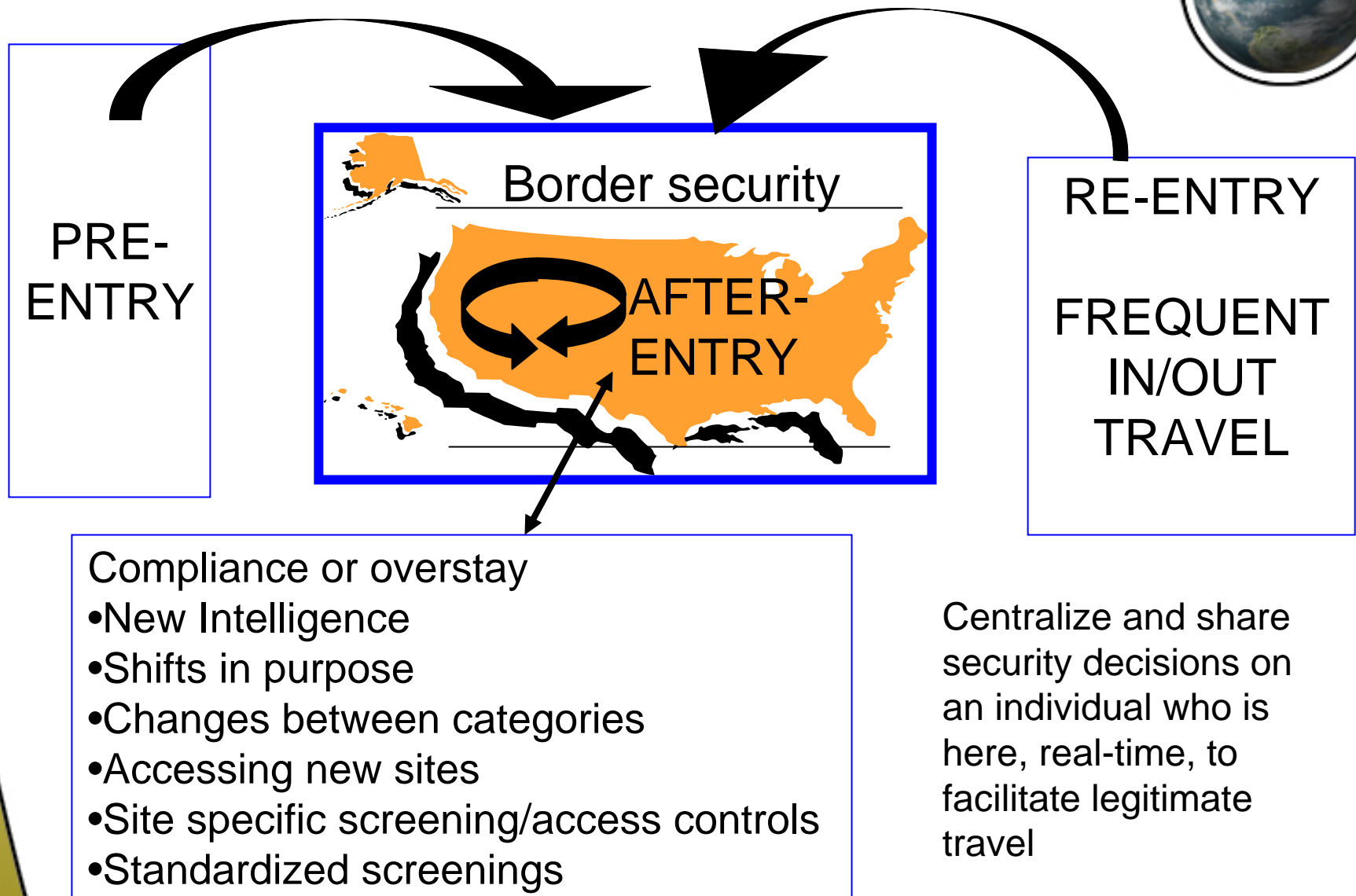


State and DHS have:

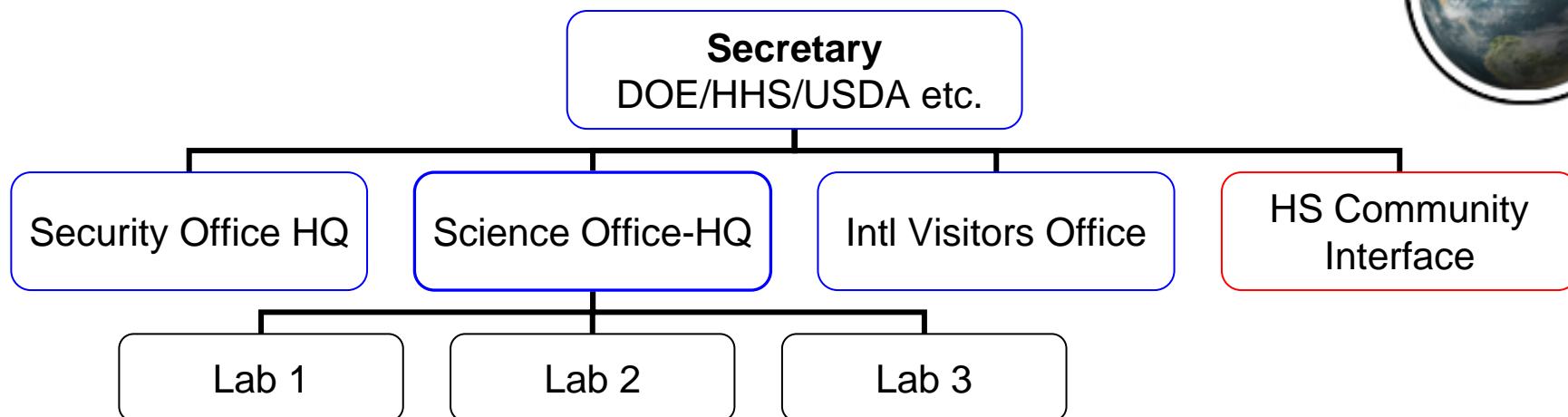
← Additional Improvements in 2005

- Increased efficiency
 - Increased transparency
 - Increased information sharing
 - Increased “memory” or track record
- By adding staff and enhancing training
 - Added interview wait times to webpage
 - SEVIS and US VISIT with FBI, sharing ETS
 - State’s electronic tracking system

End to End Screening Process



Point-of-Source Controls



Two Objectives:

- keep U.S. pre-eminent in science and technology
- do not provide unauthorized access to intl/wmd materials

Thus:

- Know who is in the agency
- Verify immigration compliance
- Involve science representation in security discussions
- Set screening/tracking policy for sites
- Decide acceptable Departmental level of security risk (SAOs)

Improvement is an Iterative Process



After entry improvements: ←

- Increased screening in certain areas
- Increased tracking for certain visa categories
- Increased information sharing
- Increased “memory” or track record
- Select Agents, Agency specific
- F, J, and M tracked in SEVIS
- SEVIS and US VISIT with FBI, sharing ETS
- State’s electronic tracking system

How can we continue improvement in 2005?

Take Away



- Situation has improved greatly over the past year.
- Efforts to continue improvement are ongoing.
- Need help getting the message out about improvements, faster processing and shorter wait times.
- Suggestions from the front lines are welcome at OSTP.



Thank you for your help.

White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

Contact Point for S&T Issues with Policy*:

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(*Individual cases should be referred to DHS/State.)